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Guardian East

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SPECIAL ISSUE:
FACING CHAOS
Accounts from the riots

Message to the troops



**By Col. Kevin Larson,
Deputy Commander for Civil
Military Operations**

All of us here in Kosovo have realized there are a large number of international organizations with people here from all over the world, and most of them are working and living throughout the towns and villages of Kosovo. I have the opportunity to work with many of these organizations every day, and since March 20, an unbelievable number of their staff have asked me to thank all of you, the soldiers of Multi-national Brigade (East), for the work you do here and especially the actions you took during the days and nights of the riots. I know many people are very grateful for everything MNB(E) does and continues to do.

Throughout the events of March 17 through 19, MNB(E) displayed dedication to the accomplishment of the mission. There was definitely a

sense of determination and teamwork between all soldiers and civilians that work with us to make MNB(E).

At one end of the spectrum, the Brigade Tactical Operations Center was a very busy place with all sections ensuring their part of the operation was being completed. Each and every member of the staff was poised; leaning forward, ready, to help in any way possible. Cooperation and teamwork was evident between different nationalities and between military and civilian sections. I'm confident the cooperation and teamwork that was demonstrated at all levels will continue throughout all parts and organizations of MNB(E).

At the other end of the spectrum, our squads and teams spread throughout our area of operation have been working directly with the people of Kosovo. We now had to work face to face with some very angry people of Kosovo. I have talked with many



**Col.
Kevin Larson**

Soldiers that were in different locations and faced situations they did not expect. I think each of us is proud of the way everyone reacted in the situations they faced. It brought to my mind the Army Value of Personal Courage, which we strive to live by each and every day. According to FM 22-100 Army Leadership, "Personal Courage isn't the absence of fear; rather, it's the ability to put fear aside and do what's necessary. It takes two forms, physical and moral. Good leaders demonstrate both." I firmly believe that you, the leaders and Soldiers of our great Task Forces, continue to demonstrate the Army Values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage.

SEE THE PHOTO OF THE DAY

www.mnbe.hqusareur.army.mil



Submissions or story ideas related to the MNB(E) mission are encouraged. Send regular mail to MNB(E) PAO, Attn: Editor, Camp Bondsteel, APO AE 09340; send e-mail to guardianeast@bondsteel2.aur.army.mil.

COVER: *Spc. Rick Brockberg, a SAW gunner with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry, searches the remains of a house in Zitinje/ Zinti. Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms.*

See page 12 for the story

Guardian East

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MPs work to save the lives of residents and soldiers during the riots.

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Staff Sgt. David Fritzke, squad leader with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry, inspects a dry well in Zitinje/ Zinti for illegal munitions. Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms. See page 12 for the story.



Accounts of the riots

Military policemen of the 514th MP Company patrol the streets of Ferizaj/ Urosevac wearing full riot control gear following the recent riots.

Story and photos by Spc. Sean McCollum

On the second day of the riots in Kosovo, a colonel found the assembled members of 3rd Platoon of the 514th Military Police Company on the outskirts of Ferizaj/Urosevac. The mission, he told them, was to extract three elderly ethnic Serb women and two Greek soldiers.

Spc. John Hale, a military policeman with the company, looked at a Greek armored personnel carrier driving away, pointed, and said, "That was them."

The mission the colonel referred to started as the Soldiers of 3rd Platoon were on their second day of continuous operations. They had a harrowing first day defending a Serbian Orthodox church from crowds estimated at 1,800 rioters. After a hectic night without sleep for the Soldiers, things had calmed down. The lull lasted until midday of the second day.

"All of a sudden the crowd started roaring," said Staff Sgt. Blaine Reeves, an MP with the unit. The crowd was incited again by a car with Greek license plates holding two reporters. Being Greek was an unpopular ethnicity with the rioters due to the actions of the first night, when Greek soldiers fired over the heads of the crowd to protect the church and themselves from being burned by rioters. After getting the reporters safely on their way, the MPs then had to deal with the crowd, who found renewed anger waiting for a target.

That target became a Greek armored personnel carrier, which was being assaulted by an estimated 800 people. The crew was trapped in the APC and firing into the air every once in a while to keep the crowd at bay. In the process of rescuing the APC occupants, Spc. LeeAndre Coltrane, also an MP with the company, learned that there were three elderly women and two Greek soldiers trapped in a nearby alleyway. He ran to get help.

"The only thing I heard him say was there's some women trapped and we've got to get them out of there," said 514th MP Staff Sgt. Darren Sprague. That was all that needed to be said as he jumped into a hastily-arranged convoy of up-armored humvees to extract the trapped Greek

soldiers protecting a mother, her wheelchair-bound daughter, and another elderly woman. Coltrane led the way and the vehicles were backed into the alleyway.

"The mother was kind of hesitant," said Coltrane. "I just picked her up. I ran around the vehicles and sat her in the backseat."

This was all done while around 15 Kosovo Police Service officers, augmented by MPs with the convoy, held back an angry mob which was throwing rocks and other objects.

"Every so often people would get through and we'd have to hand them over to KPS. The amount of hate that was in those people's eyes was just amazing. They'd come through that line, eyes bulging, veins bulging, ready to kill," said Sprague.

The Greeks and the local Serbs were loaded into the humvees and the remaining MPs ran to find open seats. The rioters burned the storefronts next to the alleyway that protected the women just 15 minutes earlier.

"I was really proud of everybody out there," said Sprague. "Everybody was levelheaded, they knew what they had to do. Our main goal was to get people out of there at all costs. And we accomplished it."

After delivering the women and soldiers to an APC bound for Camp Rigas Fereos and informing the colonel, the MPs of 3rd Platoon went back into Ferizaj/ Urosevac to continue providing security to the people of Kosovo.

By the third day, the situation was calm. Children played tag and sold candy around the significant number of MPs protecting the church, which was damaged but still standing, and the residents of Ferizaj/Urosevac walked around the town square just like any other normal day. A curfew was announced for 6 p.m., and as night fell residents could be seen hurrying back to their homes. The platoon and the rest of the 514th, after leaving a handful of MP's at the site, handed the night over to the Soldiers of the 2-136th Infantry from Bosnia and headed home for a well-deserved rest.



Above and below: Photos of buildings that were burned in the recent riots on a main road in Ferizaj/ Urosevac.

Background photo: Soldiers of the 514th Military Police Company and the 2-136th Infantry Division are patrolling the streets in full riot gear, after the riots.



Accounts of the riots

Two Soldiers of the Joint Visitors Bureau were escorting a guest in a patrol of the Vitina/ Viti area when it all began.

Story by Spc. Rob Barker

On a normal day, you can find Soldiers of the Joint Visitors Bureau welcoming visitors from all over the world to Camp Bondsteel and transporting them wherever they need to go, whether that means taking time eating lunch with the Soldiers, meeting with Soldiers, or joining the Soldiers on patrol.

March 17th began like normal for two Soldiers of the JVB, Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Heinrich and Spc. Matt Kramer, who were escorting Marine Sgt. Maj. John Mersino, the senior enlisted advisor of European Command, on a patrol of the Vitina/Viti area with the 2nd Platoon of Charlie Company, 2-135th Infantry.

Mersino was visiting Kosovo to meet with Soldiers as they patrolled the streets, but by 3:30 in the afternoon it was obvious he was going to see more than he planned when the patrol received an alert that protests were expected in the sector.

"The squad was told to show a presence, so we moved to a park to provide a show of force," said Heinrich. "Then we proceeded to the United Nations building in Vitina, and we saw a gathering of people. [The demonstrators] assured us it was going to be a peaceful demonstration."

Heinrich said the Soldiers became alarmed when their interpreter relayed some of the comments he heard the demonstrators making.

"Albanian elders started making speeches and handing out Albanian flags, and telling kids to 'now go and do what you know to do,'" said Heinrich.

The Soldiers witnessed the crowds beginning to throw rocks at Serbian houses and a church in the area. The infantrymen and their squad leader, Staff Sgt. David Weiss, stood between the protestors and the church, trying to keep the peace.

Though outnumbered about 30 to 1, said Heinrich, 2nd Platoon maintained their positions and assured each others' safety.

"Rocks and stones were thrown, but we did what we could," said Heinrich. "Staff Sergeant Weiss pulled his squad's vehicles into a wedge formation to contain the crowd, and prevent further damage."

The Soldiers maintained the position until they were reinforced by additional Soldiers of Charlie Company.

"The JVB did not have the riot control training that the maneuver units had," said Heinrich, "so really it was a matter of taking orders from the squad leader."

And taking the squad leader's orders paid off, said Heinrich.

"Listening to his good direction and being a presence in the area saved some lives and property," said Heinrich. "It was his show and Staff Sgt. Weiss and his team did a great job. They were calm, cool and collected and knew exactly what to do."

While the infantrymen of the unit and the two soldiers saved property and lives in Viti/Vitina, Heinrich was saddened to see the residents take huge steps back.

"It's just really sad to see people ruin the progress that has been made over the last five years, and see them go back to square one."

After the Soldiers were reinforced, Heinrich, Kramer and Mersino headed back to Bondsteel to end their not-so-normal day with an idea of how essential patrols are in the Kosovo region.





What ethnic-Albanian residents promised would be a peaceful protest in Vitina/ Viti, turned into a violent demonstration in which local Serb homes, churches and automobiles were burned and vandalized. Photos by Spc. Matt Kramer, Task Force Falcon Joint Visitors Bureau.



Accounts of the riots

Cavalry Soldiers of Task Force Redhorse describe their experiences during the riots.

Story and photos by Sgt. Jon Soucy

Providing a safe and secure environment in Kosovo took on a high-profile stance recently as the region erupted in what many say was the worst violence and upheaval since the end of the war here in 1999.

The drowning death of two ethnic Albanian boys in the northern town of Kosovska Mitrovica/ Mitrovica, and the presumed death of a third who has yet to be found, is what many have pointed to as the trigger for three days of riots that encompassed all of Kosovo including the Multi-national Brigade (East) sector.


Though large-scale violence hasn't been seen in Kosovo for the past five years, Soldiers of MNB (East) were prepared to handle the disturbances.

"I felt very secure because of my training and the force behind me," said Sgt. Asa Moeckly, a squad leader with Alpha Troop, 1-113th Cavalry, whose unit was one of many to respond to riots in Gnjilane/ Gjilan.

"When we were in [Fort Stewart,] Georgia, we did riot training drills," said Spc. Zac McDowell, a scout with the same unit. "I kept the same mindset."

For many in the unit, using the skills they trained on to quell and control a riot were ones they had not expected to use during their time in Kosovo.

(See CAV page 11)



Soldiers from Alpha Troop, 1-113th Cavalry pull security in Gnjilane/ Gjilan following riots that erupted in the town.



As the sun begins to rise, Soldiers from Alpha Troop, 1-113th Cavalry, stop vehicles in Gnjilane/ Gjilan that are out during curfew time. A curfew was put into place after riots erupted in the city.

Accounts of the riots

(CAV from page 9)

"I couldn't imagine anything like this happening while we were here," said McDowell. "It was the craziest, most intense thing I've ever seen."

During the riots in Gnjilane/ Gnjilan, roughly a dozen cars were overturned and set on fire. In addition numerous homes and other buildings had windows shattered and doors broken, and many people fled the area fearing violence.

Soldiers estimated the crowds on the first day of riots were several thousand strong.

"I'm still trying to fathom what I saw," said Pfc. Nicholas Ranch, also a scout with the same unit. "It was just a sea of people. It was sensory overload."

He said that after arriving on the scene the crowd swarmed around the humvee in which he was traveling.

"All I could see were people," Ranch said. "They were grabbing onto the brush guard and shaking the vehicle."

Despite being pelted with rocks and other materials, Soldiers were able to maintain control of the situation and carry on the mission of providing a safe and secure environment.

"We were out here before the riots started up," said Moeckly. "We watched it start up and we immediately implemented control measures to quell it and keep people safe."

"Things seem to have quieted down from what they have been the last couple of days," said Sgt. Samuel Waters, a squad leader with the unit. "I think because of the force that we have out here in Gnjilane/ Gjilan it seems to be getting back to normal."

Though the riots will undoubtedly be one of the most memorable experiences for the unit during their rotation in Kosovo, the Soldiers said their mission of providing a safe and secure environment will be minimally affected.

"Soldiers will be a little more on their toes," said McDowell. "But our mission is a safe environment."

And the Soldiers said they stand ready to complete their mission.

Accounts of the riots

Staff Sgt. David Fritzke, squad leader with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry and interpreter Betim Qyqalla, left, speak to a resident of Zitinje/ Zinti about the recent riots and how they have affected him.



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Accounts of the riots



Spc. Rick Brockberg, a squad automatic weapon gunner with Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry, steps down from the ruins of a house in Zitinje/Zinti after searching it for illegal weapons.

Task Force Bayonet

Members of Alpha Company, 2-135th Infantry recently aided other NATO soldiers here in moving Kosovo Serbs to safety from the violence that was occurring against them. The ethnic Serbs were at a Kosovo Police Service station and United Nations campground near Novoselle/ Novo Selo and had to be moved to the French base Camp Marechal de Lattre de Tassigny, where they would be safe from the possibility of being killed.

During the days of violence, members of Alpha Company also conducted roadblocks and vehicle control points between Prishtina/ Pristina and the northern town Mitrovica/ Kosovska Mitrovica. All that work started with a call.

Around 6:30 p.m. on March 17, members of Alpha Company were told they had five minutes to get their gear and get to the motor pool. The Soldiers were on their way to Prishtina/ Pristina by 7:30 p.m.

On their way to the north, the troops encountered a group of angry protesters in Ferizaj/ Urosevac and someone from the crowd hurled a brick that was deflected off the gun turret of a humvee.

"I didn't know what it was at first," said Spc. Sammie Cole, gunner-driver with the unit. "I thought it may have been a shot but then looked and saw it was a brick that hit."

Once through the cluster of people, the Soldiers made their way to the capital city and waited until the route to Novoselle/ Novo Selo was cleared. Once cleared, they drove to the French base where they stayed for the night. The next evening they assisted in moving around 300 local Serb citizens to safety from possible attacks against them.

"We had to make room for 30 people in the humvees," said Sgt. Armando Abila-Reyes, a team leader with 2nd Platoon. The ethnic Serbs had been brought to a KPS station to be moved. In addition, people of other ethnicities were at a U.N. campground and had to be taken to safety at the French base, said Abila-Reyes.

After moving local Serbians for their

protection, the Soldiers all felt a sense of pride.

"We all stood a little taller and felt proud making a difference for someone else," said Abila-Reyes. "These people would have died had we not pulled them out of there."

"We're doing an awesome job here," said Spc. Rick Brockberg, a squad automatic weapon gunner with Alpha Company. "We did more good last week than our whole time here."

Other than moving people, the Soldiers of Alpha Company also set up a roadblock and vehicle checkpoints during their mission.

"We set up a blocking position on the way to Mitrovica [from Prishtina/ Pristina]," said Staff Sgt. David Fritzke, Alpha Company squad leader. "There was no traffic allowed north and the only traffic allowed south was the authorities here." While manning the roadblock and checkpoints there were no major problems except a few angry drivers, said Fritzke.

After the violence ended, the Soldiers went back to a fairly normal routine in their patrol missions with a few exceptions.

"The only major difference I noticed is we have to wear all our gear," said Fritzke, "Also I like to talk to people about riots with info they have and maybe find out things and investigate it."

When they talk to Kosovars about the recent events many are very angry about what happened.

"Everyone we talked to is upset about what happened and think that it set Kosovo back with all the progress in the last couple of years," said Fritzke.

Although the recent upheaval set Kosovo back a bit from the progress that has been made in recent years, the Soldiers will work hard with the people to aid in the future progress of Kosovo.

"We continue to work hard to make Kosovo a better place and for people to enjoy," said Fritzke. "We need them as much as they need us."



Soldiers from Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry, travel in M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicles while conducting a patrol in Gnjlane/ Gjilan. The Bradleys are being used to patrol throughout the area as a “show of force” measure following riots that erupted in the town.

Accounts of the riots

Infantry Soldiers of Task Force Redhorse were in Gnjilane/ Gjilan when the riots began.

Story and photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy

As a result of the riots that broke out throughout Kosovo many changes have taken place throughout Multi-national Brigade (East). Security has been heightened, curfews have been imposed and Soldiers of Alpha Company, 2-136th Infantry, are using a new mode of transportation as they patrol their assigned sector.

The infantrymen have traded in their humvees and now are using M2 Bradley fighting vehicles as their mode of transportation while conducting patrols throughout their sector.

For the infantrymen, this new change is part of their mission in Kosovo.

"Because of what has happened in recent days with the mass violence, the [local residents] see that we've upped our level and are serious about our job and want to maintain peace in Kosovo," said Spc. James Rieger, an infantryman with the unit.

The Bradleys are used as security and a show of force measure to deter violence.

"With having the Bradleys on the streets it shows that a show of force is definitely there, ready to maintain a safe and secure environment," said Rieger.

And for the infantrymen that is an important part of their job.

"I see the importance of it," said Sgt. Ryan Chietwood, also an infantryman with the unit. "It's very relevant to our mission right now to have [the Bradleys] out with us so that we create a safe environment."

The fact that riots broke out and Soldiers are now patrolling in Bradleys took unit members by surprise.

"Everything was kind of out of sorts," said Rieger, of the riots. "It caught me off guard. I couldn't have predicted anything like that could have happened."

And now that they are patrolling in Bradleys, the reaction from local residents has been mixed.

"At first it seemed the people were a little timid, a little scared," said Chietwood, "but I think they've gotten used to them now."

"The kids love them," said Rieger, of the vehicles. "They find the Bradleys neat and interesting."

The infantrymen hope their use of armored vehicles to patrol the area drives home the seriousness of recent events.

"I think that this would get [the local residents] to be at more of a state of awareness as to how serious these riots have been to the safety of everyone around," said Chietwood.

For most in the unit, patrolling in Bradleys hasn't changed how they perform their mission in Kosovo, just their mode of transportation as they do their job. For some, the vehicles have brought about other changes.

"It gets pretty shaky back there," said Chietwood, of riding in the back of the Bradley. "I just have to remember not to drink so much coffee in the morning or else I'll get sick to my stomach."

Accounts of the riots

Greek soldiers tell their story of riots

Story by 1st Sgt. David Stevenson

Photos by Sgt. Erik Morris, 514th MP Company



The side door of a Serb church in Ferizaj/ Urosevac where two propane tanks were set ablaze by rioters but did not explode during the recent violence there.

Of all the stories to come out of the violence that started March 17, perhaps one of the most disturbing and shocking stories to surface is that of the Greek 525th Mechanized Infantry Battalion soldiers who were guarding a Serbian Orthodox church in Ferizaj/Urosevac. Below is a press release that details the event.

A soldier with the Greek 525th Mechanized Infantry Battalion received second degree burns to his face and neck during a March 17 attack on the unit's observation post at the Serbian Church of Saint Uros in Ferizaj/Urosevac by a crowd of approximately 500 rioters. One U.S. Soldier and 16 other Greek soldiers received minor injuries from items the crowd was throwing.

The crowd arrived at the observation post at approximately 5:30 p.m. and threw a grenade at the soldiers of the observation post. The soldiers reported the incident and Greek Army Maj. Kyriakos Kondogiannis, commander of the battalion, and U.S. Army 1st Lt. Milan D. George of the 649th Military Intelligence Battalion and officer in charge of the Analysis and Collection Team at Camp Rigas Fereos, responded to investigate the call.

Shortly after the two officers arrived, the crowd began attacking the observation post with rocks and bricks, injuring George in the process, forcing the soldiers to evacuate him to the church.

Then the crowd began attacking the Greek soldiers with grenades and improvised incendiary devices. Kondogiannis then ordered half of the soldiers into the church while the other half remained outside in the unit's armored vehicles and awaited the Greek Army's Quick Reaction Force that had been called to assist the soldiers.

The crowd began setting fire to the first of three unoccupied military vehicles while the soldiers waited for the QRF. Then the rioters attempted to enter the church and stopped when they were confronted by the soldiers inside, but continued to attack the church with grenades and incendiary devices.

The attack continued after Kondogiannis ordered the soldiers to fire their weapons in the air in an attempt to disperse the crowd, which had grown to approximately 1,000 to 3,000 people, and was still underway when the QRF arrived in armored vehicles to evacuate the soldiers at approximately 10 p.m. The rioters began throwing incendiary devices at the QRF vehicles and were not dispelled until U.S. helicopters began dropping tear gas on the crowd, dispersing them enough for the evacuation to take place. During the evacuation, rioters fired at the soldiers and their vehicles.

Once the evacuation was complete U.S. military police and members of the Kosovo Police Service arrived to secure the church site. The crowd, reduced to about 150 people, did not continue the attack.

By the end of the night an estimated 200 incendiary devices, 15 grenades, and numerous rocks were thrown at the soldiers and the church during the attack, resulting in the destruction of three military vehicles and damage to two others.

While there was a great deal of damage and at least one serious injury, George said it could have been even worse.

"The requirements were met for the use of deadly force, however a conscientious decision was made not to use such force," he said.

Kondogiannis said the actions of the rioters was a great disappointment.

"I would like very much to see a peaceful Ferizaj," he said. "We want to keep the peace and not fight against the citizens of Kosovo."



A Molotov cocktail thrown during the riots lies on the ground in front of a Serb church in Ferizaj/ Urosevac.



A grenade thrown during the riots lies in rubble on the ground in front of a Serb church in Ferizaj/ Urosevac.

Holy Week and Easter in Kosovo

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Timothy Peterson

The days of Holy Week and Easter are special for Christians. These days are celebrated in a variety of ways in different churches and in different countries.

In most years, Easter is even celebrated on different days, with the Orthodox Easter coming later than the Catholic Easter and the Protestant Easter. In 2004, though, all Christians celebrate Easter on Sunday, 11 April.

I hope you will have a blessed celebration of Easter this year in Kosovo, even though you are away from your families and your home religious communities.

The different nations involved with KFOR will all be celebrating Easter in accordance with the traditions and the religious groups within those nations. Here is a summary of the religious affiliation of the nations involved with MNB(E):

Greece – primarily the Greek Orthodox Church

Poland – primarily the Roman Catholic Church

Ukraine – primarily the Ukrainian Orthodox

Church

Lithuania – primarily the Roman Catholic

Church

Armenia – primarily the Armenian Apostolic

Church

United States – very diverse, with about half Protestant and a fourth Roman Catholic, and significant numbers of Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Hindus, and followers of other religions.

Each base will have its own celebrations for Holy Week and Easter. Here is the significance of some of the special services that will be held:

Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter) – Remembering the celebration that occurred when Jesus came into Jerusalem. Sometimes this Sunday is also used to meditate on the suffering and death of Jesus.

Maundy Thursday (or Holy Thursday) – Remembering the Last Supper Jesus had with his disciples before he was crucified. The establishment of Holy Communion is also celebrated.

Good Friday (or Holy Friday) – Remembering the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross.

Stations of the Cross – A Roman Catholic service where people meditate on Jesus' suffering and death.

Easter Vigil – A Roman Catholic service on Saturday evening (Easter Eve) celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus.

Easter Sunrise – A service held early on Easter morning that celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus.

Easter Worship Schedules

Camp Bondsteel North Chapel

*Maundy/Holy Thursday 8 April 2004

1830 Catholic Mass

2000 Protestant Holy Thursday Service

*Good Friday 9 April 2004

1500 Stations of the Cross/Good Friday Service

1600-1800 Catholic Sacrament of Reconciliation

1900 Jesus' Seven Last Words (Ecumenical)

*Holy Saturday 10 April 2004

2000 Catholic Easter Vigil

*Easter/Resurrection Sunday 11 April 2004

0630 Sunrise Service (Ecumenical)

0930 Catholic Mass

1100 Protestant Easter Celebration Service

1400 Gospel Service

Camp Bondsteel South Chapel

*Maundy/Holy Thursday 8 April 2004

1830 Protestant Holy Thursday Service

2000 Catholic Mass

*Good Friday 9 April 2004

1200 Jesus' Seven Last Words (Ecumenical)

*Easter/Resurrection Sunday 11 April 2004

0800 Catholic Mass

0930 Protestant Easter Celebration Service

(The 0930 SERVICE WILL BE HELD IN THE THEATER)

1300 Latter Day Saints Worship

Camp Monteith

*Maundy/Holy Thursday 8 April 2004

1000 Protestant Service with Communion

1700 Protestant Service with Communion

*Good Friday 9 April 2004

0900 Protestant Service

1200 Catholic Stations of the Cross Service

1900 Protestant Service

*Holy Saturday 10 April 2004

2000 Catholic Easter Vigil @ North Chapel, Camp Bondsteel

*Easter/Resurrection Sunday 11 April 2004

0600 Protestant Sunrise Service

1000 Traditional Protestant

1230 Catholic Mass

1700 Contemporary Protestant



Chaplain (Lt. Col.)
Timothy Peterson

Westpoint Cadet provides help during the riots

Story by Spc. Sean McCollum

First Lt. Jeff Blowers of Charlie Company, 2-135th Infantry, was driving up to the gates of Camp Bondsteel with his squad when the radio crackled with orders to turn around. The riots had hit a fever pitch and the squad had to return to the area of Viti/Vitina. Hitching a ride on this unexpected detour was Cadet Joel Edds, a visiting senior from West Point.

While most of the West Point cadets visiting the area were recalled back to Camp Bondsteel during the recent disturbances in Kosovo, Edds was one of the few who were able to utilize three years of West Point training outside the wire. He was supporting a mission to minimize property damage to ethnic Serbian homes and provide extra security to a command sergeant major who had been unable to move due to the disturbances.

"By the time we got there things were kind of getting out of control," said Blowers. Outnumbered and preoccupied, the West Point cadet stayed on the scene and became one of Blowers' men.

As a new Charlie Company member, Edds was involved in blocking rioter access to a bridge near a Serbian Orthodox church. When ethnic Serb homes were set ablaze, the Soldiers of Charlie Company pushed the angry crowd back and called for firefighters. When the people who were burning the homes also blocked the primary route for the fire trucks, the Soldiers cleared and held an alternate route. The group also created perimeters to protect the local Serb homes that were spread across a wide area of the town. A few homes were lost to the rioters' violence, but the unit saved the church.

Blowers said Edds reacted well to the unexpected experience of real-world peacekeeping.

"He did really well. He followed my lead, started doing the things I was doing. It was just like I had another lieutenant on the ground. He did a great job," said Blowers. "It didn't take him more than a couple of minutes to control the people, to do what I was going to do, to do what the other Soldiers were doing. He picked it up really quickly."

The cadet spent around two and a half hours facing the rioters and helping the unit in its mission of protecting homes, the church, and the firefighters battling the blazes. After a while Blowers' group was reinforced, and he pulled Edds off the front line to a rear position at a bridge behind the church.

"Things were getting a little bit more rough and at that time I had a little bit more support on the ground. I felt like I could lose that one man and I left him back on the bridge with my platoon sergeant."

Edds, who had to this point studied peacekeeping only in books and lectures, had his first real-world experience in the subject. Blowers said it was a test the cadet passed with flying colors.

USMA FACTS



Firsties show off their class rings on Ring Weekend

Location

The Academy is located approximately 50 miles north of New York City on the Hudson River. The campus and central post area comprise only a small portion of the nearly 16,000 acre reservation.

Admission

To be considered for admission to West Point, a candidate must be at least 17 but not yet 23 years old on July 1st of the year of admission, be unmarried, and have no legal obligation to support children. Candidates must be qualified academically, medically, and physically, and must receive a nomination from an approved source, such as a member of Congress.

Corps of Cadets

The 4,000 members of the Corps of Cadets represent every state in the U.S. and several foreign countries. About 1,200 New Cadets enter the Academy on Reception Day each year (about July 1st).

Classes

In addition to a core curriculum, balanced in the arts and sciences, and a required five-course engineering sequence, cadets may select from 31 fields of study and 19 optional majors. Classes are small, usually less than 18, and the faculty to student ratio is 1:8.

Activities

Over 100 extracurricular activities are available, including religious, hobby, and sports clubs.

Graduation

Upon graduation, cadets are awarded Bachelor of Science degrees and commissions in the U.S. Army. They serve on active duty for a minimum of five years. West Point graduates have served our country in a variety of capacities over the last 200 years, as military leaders, engineers, explorers on land and in space, and as leaders in business and government.

'Band of Brothers' series features six Soldiers

By Kara Motosicky

WASHINGTON –The personal experiences of six Soldiers will be highlighted as part of the airing of the "Band of Brothers" mini-series on the History Channel.

The segments connect the Soldiers fighting for their country today to the men who fought with Easy Company during World War II.

The Soldiers' stories began airing last week as promotional segments for the mini-series, which is based on the best-selling book by Stephen Ambrose that features the Soldiers of "Easy Company."

The promotional segments will vary in length from one to 10 minutes. A half-hour preview program, now showing on the channel, caps the segments. The Soldiers will give lead-ins and recaps of most episodes in the series.

The program ties together the historical and modern Army by tracing a lasting set of values. The footage features Soldiers who have recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan talking about their experiences serving overseas and what their Army service means to them. Their stories are paralleled with those of the men of Company E, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division.

Four of the featured Soldiers in the stories also are from the 101st Abn. Div. They are Pvt. 1st Class Cameron Sharp, Sgt. 1st Class David Ainslie, 1st Sgt. Charles Haley and Capt. Kevin Williams.

Also featured is Spc. Richard A. Jacob of the 3rd Squadron, 7th U.S. Cavalry with the 3rd Infantry Division, the lead unit to enter Iraq; and Sgt. Josiah "Bret" Blalock of the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), who participated in cave-clearing operations in Afghanistan.

"The Army is a bond ...it's a band of brothers," Williams said in one segment. "It just can't be recreated in any other situation. I'm very proud to be a part of the Army."

Jacob agreed that fighting for the Army is a unique experience.

"Once you put on this uniform you feel like you're doing something a lot of people can't do," said Jacob. "You're fighting for a country that's given you just about anything and any opportunity you want. It's the most exciting thing on the planet."

The "Band of Brothers" series will begin airing in April, during ongoing national welcome-home events, known as "Operation Tribute to Freedom," for Soldiers returning from overseas duties.

A savings plan for deployed Soldiers

ARLINGTON, VA- Deployed uniformed service members have the chance to earn a guaranteed 10 percent interest on their savings annually.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in accordance with the Department of Defense implemented the Savings Deposit Program in August 1990 for members who were serving in the Persian Gulf Conflict. The Act progressively changed to include troops assigned to areas of operation outside the United States on ships or mobile units. This program includes Operation Iraqi Freedom service members assigned to a combat zone or in direct support of a combat zone.

"A service member can contribute up to \$10,000, but interest of 10 percent will not accrue after that amount," said Roger Castillo, program director for the Savings Deposit Program. "A member can participate in the program if the member is serving outside the United States or its possessions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and has served at least 30 consecutive days in an area that has been designated as a combat zone or in direct support of a combat zone. Also, members serving on permanent duty assignment outside the United States or its possessions in support of contingency operations and serving on active duty in the designated area for more than 30 days."

To make a deposit into the fund, troops are asked to contact their financial office. Withdrawing the money before leaving the combat zone is not authorized, unless there is an emergency. The last day to make a deposit into the fund is the date of departure from the assignment, however, interest will accrue up to 90 days after return from deployment.

"This is a great opportunity for service members to accrue at a higher interest rate than at an average interest rate of two or three percent," said Patrick T. Shine, acting director of DFAS. "We are always taking the extra step to assist our troops and their families in anyway possible, especially while members are deployed."

DFAS will post the savings deposit balance of active-component members to their Leave and Earnings Statement.

SOLDIER

SECTION Q N' A:

What did you learn/ experience from the recent riots?

Staff Sgt. Timothy Patterson

"I learned how quickly our unit can get together, get organized, and get on the road."



Photo by Spc. Sean McCollum

Staff Sgt. Timothy Patterson, an Infantryman with Bravo Company, 2-135th Infantry, gets his picture taken for a new ID card by Sgt. 1st Class Janice Wilking of the 147th AG Battalion at the Personnel Services Branch in Admin Alley.

Spc. Jacob Elgin

"Always expect the unexpected."



Photo by Spc. Rob Barker

Spc. Jacob Elgin, a gunner/ driver with the 682nd Engineer Battalion, loads his shotgun during a recent non-lethal weapons training range held on Camp Bondsteel.

Spc. Sam Janke

"I learned to always stay alert and look out for my fellow Soldiers around me."



Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms

Spc. Sam Janke, a military policeman with the 514th MP Company, has his weapon rodded before he enters Camp Bondsteel

Spc. Jettie Silva

"The riots reminded me of the fact that ethnic intolerance is unacceptable and we need to do our part to stop the violence and stress the importance of human rights."



Photo by Sgt. Jon Soucy

Spc. Jettie Silva, left, a civil affairs specialist with the 448th Civil Affairs Battalion, and interpreter Dorlir Behluli, load mattresses on the back of a humvee. The mattresses were delivered to a group of Serbs who were displaced by the recent riots in Gnjilane who for the time being are living out of a school.



Scenes of Kosovo
The village of Zitinje/ Zinti
Photo by Spc. Tim Grooms